



Cast Announcement

For Release: February 4, 2020

Media Contact:

Melissa Ferlaak

Senior Communications Manager

612.872.5110

mferlaak@childrenstheatre.org

Children's Theatre Company Announces the Cast of *Annie*

WHAT: Children's Theatre Company (CTC) is proud to announce the cast for the production of *Annie*, running **April 19 through June 21, 2020**, directed by **Peter Rothstein**, choreographed by **Kelli Foster Warder**, and music direction by **Victor Zupanc**. The cast list includes **Nicola Wahl** (Annie), **JoeNathan Thomas** (Oliver Warbucks), **Emily Gunyou Halaas** (Miss Hannigan), **Janely Rodriguez** (Grace Farrell), **Gerald Drake** (Drake/Ensemble), **Dean Holt** (Fred McCracken/multiple characters), **Autumn Ness** (Lily St. Regis), **Reed Sigmund** (Rooster), **Shinah Brashears** (Mrs. Greer/multiple characters), **Marc Gill** (multiple characters), **Audrey Mojica** (Orphan/Annie Cover), **Elsa Dungan-Hawks**, **Madelyn Davis**, **KateMarie Andrews**, **Anja Arora**, **Chloe Lou Erickson**, **Adelyn Frost**, **Valerie Wick** (Orphans), **Madison Neal**, **Julia Zook** (Boylan Sisters), **Sam Mandell** (Bert Healy/Rugrat), **Luca La Hoz Calassara** (Rugrat), **Joy Meyers**, **Will Schmitt**, and **Thaddeus Williamson** (Ensemble). See below for full cast list including external understudies. [Click here](#) for cast list plus headshots.

ABOUT: It's a goose-bump-inducing, gorgeous production that fills the stage and the hearts of everyone who watches it. Times are tough, spirits are low, and the world is in dire need of hope. Enter, stage left: a delightful underdog—a cute, yet mischievously feisty little girl. She takes on the world and, with an equal share of moxie and music, unlocks hearts and changes lives through kindness, love, and spirit.

"*Annie* is, without question, one of the truly great American musicals," states Director **Peter Rothstein**. "It is set in the Great Depression and the young hero of the story, offers a profound voice of hope, determination, and optimism. The musical is also a celebration of non-traditional and chosen families. I hope audiences young and old are captivated by her spunk, her charm, and her wisdom."

"This piece is filled with humor, intrigue, and at the center is a friendship and love that are profound and moving," states CTC Artistic Director, **Peter C. Brosius**. "What I also love about this musical is seeing how even in the darkest of times, during the Great Depression, that a feeling that anything is possible can still survive and flourish. We can't wait to share this production with you because it inspires, delights, and fills us with a powerful sense of joy."

THEMES: Family; friendship; hope; optimism; justice; joy; unemployment; love; homelessness; resilience; giving; community; Great Depression.

PRESS DATES: Media are invited to attend opening weekend performances, which include:

Friday, April 24 at 7pm

Saturday, April 25 at 2pm

Sunday, April 26 at 2pm

Each media person can RSVP for two tickets gratis with the option to purchase additional tickets. Production photos for world premieres will be sent within two days of the first preview performance. Promotional photos may be sent in advance of production photos.

SOURCE: **Children's Theatre Company**
2400 Third Ave S, Minneapolis

MEDIA NOTES: Contact Melissa Ferlaak, Senior Communications Manager, for access to interviews with the creative team, actors, or CTC executive staff.

Children's Theatre Company (CTC) is the nation's largest and most acclaimed theatre for young people and serves a multigenerational audience. It creates theatre experiences that educate, challenge, and inspire for more than 295,000 people annually. CTC is the only theatre focused on young audiences to win the coveted Tony Award® for Outstanding Regional Theatre and is the only theatre in Minnesota to receive three Tony® nominations (for its production of *A Year with Frog and Toad*). CTC is committed to creating world class productions at the highest level and to developing new works, more than 200 to date, dramatically changing the canon of work for young audiences.

CTC's engagement and learning programs annually serve more than 93,000 young people and their communities through Theatre Arts Training, student matinees, Neighborhood Bridges, and early childhood arts education programs. ACT One is CTC's comprehensive platform for access, diversity, and inclusion in our audiences, programs, staff, and board that strives to ensure the theatre is a home for all people, all families, reflective of our community. childrenstheatre.org

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Annie

Book by Thomas Meehan

Music by Charles Strouse

Lyrics by Martin Charnin

Directed by Peter Rothstein

Choreographed by Kelli Foster Warder

Music Direction by Victor Zupanc

Best Enjoyed by Everyone

UnitedHealth Group Stage

Creative Team & Production Staff

Scenic Designer | **Vicki Smith**

Costume Designer | **Richard O. Hamson**

Lighting Designer | **Paul Whitaker**

Associate Sound Designer | **Sten Severson**

Animal Trainer | **William Berloni**

Animal Handler | **Tyler Garstka**

Assistant Director | **Anna Moskowitz**

Stage Manager | **Jenny R. Friend**

Assistant Stage Manager/Stage Manager | **Kathryn Sam Houkom**

Assistant Stage Manager | **Nate Stanger**

Stage Management Intern | **Kayla Basco**

CAST

Oliver Warbucks | **JoeNathan Thomas**
Grace Farrell | **Janely Rodriguez**
Miss Hannigan | **Emily Gunyou Halaas**
Drake, Apple Seller, Carriage Driver, Street Sweeper, Sound Man | **Gerald Drake**
Mr. Pugh, President Roosevelt, Bundles McCloskey, Lt. Ward, Fred McCracken, Wacky, Dogcatcher, Cab Driver | **Dean Holt**
Lily St. Regis | **Autumn Ness**
Rooster | **Reed Sigmund**
Mrs. Greer, Boylan Sister, Sophie, Grandma | **Shinah Brashears**
Assistant, Chauffeur, Cop, Santa Claus, Producer, Louis McHenry | **Marc Gill**
Annie | **Nicola Wahl**
Orphan/Annie Cover | **Audrey Mojica**
Molly | **Elsa Dungan-Hawks**
Tessie | **Madelyn Davis**
Boylan Sister/Ensemble | **Madison Neal, Julia Zook**
Bert Healy/Rugrat | **Sam Mandell**
Rugrat | **Luca La Hoz Calassara**
Orphans | **KateMarie Andrews, Anja Arora, Chloe Lou Erickson, Adelyn Rose Frost, Valerie Wick**
Ensemble | **Joy Meyers, Will Schmitt, Thaddeus (Tad) Williamson**

UNDERSTUDIES

Miss Hannigan, Lily St. Regis, Mrs. Greer, Boylan Sister, Sophie, Grandma | **Becca Hart**
Oliver Warbucks | **C. Ryan Shipley**
Grace Farrell | **Shinah Brashears**
Rooster | **Marc Gill**
Annie | **Mabel Weismann**
Orphans | **Emily Huggett, Sidney Whiteside, Mabel Weismann**
Bert Healy | **Luca La Hoz Calassara**
Student Ensemble | **Peder Lindell, Paige Klemenhagen**

Runtime: 2 hours, including one 15-minute intermission.

Tickets:

The Ticket Office is accessible by phone two hours prior to most performances. These posted hours are subject to change.

Email: tickets@childrenstheatre.org (inquiries only, no ticket processing)

Phone: 612.874.0400

Website: <https://childrenstheatre.org>

Subscription packages are available. Please see website for complete details:

<https://childrenstheatre.org/tickets/subscribe>

Lap passes available for children newborn to three years for \$5

ASL/AD Performance: Friday, May 15 at 7pm and Sunday, May 31 at 5pm

Sensory Friendly Performance: Friday, June 12 at 7pm

Group tickets up to 10% off regular tickets for groups of six to nine.

Group tickets up to 25% off regular tickets for groups of ten or more.

Performance Dates

Sunday, April 19 at 7pm (Preview)

Tuesday, April 21 at 7pm (Preview)
Wednesday, April 22 at 7pm (Preview)
Thursday, April 23 at 7pm (Preview)
Friday, April 24 at 7pm (Opening)
Saturday, April 25 at 2pm and 5pm (Opening Weekend)
Sunday, April 26 at 2pm and 5pm (Opening Weekend)

Thursday, April 30 at 7pm
Friday, May 1 at 7pm
Saturday, May 2 at 11am and 2pm
Sunday, May 3 at 2pm and 5pm

Thursday, May 7 at 7pm
Friday, May 8 at 7pm
Saturday, May 9 at 11am and 2pm
Sunday, May 10 at 2pm and 5pm

Thursday, May 14 at 7pm
Friday, May 15 at 7pm (ASL/AD Performance)
Saturday, May 16 at 11am
Sunday, May 17 at 2pm and 5pm

Thursday, May 21 at 7pm
Friday, May 22 at 7pm
Saturday, May 23 at 2pm and 5pm
Sunday, May 24 at 2pm and 5pm

Thursday, May 28 at 7pm
Friday, May 29 at 7pm
Saturday, May 30 at 11am and 2pm
Sunday, May 31 at 2pm and 5pm (ASL/AD Performance)

Thursday, June 4 at 7pm
Friday, June 5 at 7pm
Saturday, June 6 at 11am and 2pm
Sunday, June 7 at 2pm and 5pm

Tuesday, June 9 at 7pm
Thursday, June 11 at 2pm
Friday, June 12 at 2pm and 7pm (Sensory Friendly Performance)
Saturday, June 13 at 11am and 2pm
Sunday, June 14 at 2pm and 5pm

Thursday, June 18 at 7pm
Friday, June 19 at 2pm
Saturday, June 20 at 11am and 2pm
Sunday, June 21 at 2pm and 5pm (Closing)

CAST

Oliver Warbucks

JoeNathan Thomas is back at CTC, having performed previously in *Once on this Island* and *Galileo*. JoeNathan has performed at The Ordway, Guthrie Theater, Mixed Blood Theatre, and History

Theatre, to name a few. Recently in *The Cradle will Rock* (Frank Theatre) and *Tinker to Evers to Chance* (Artistry).

Grace Farrell

Janely Rodriguez (she/her) is a Miami native and Brenau University graduate. She has enjoyed roles in *Cinderella* (ensemble/understudy) and *Three Little Birds* (understudy) as a CTC Performing Apprentice. She has also had the pleasure of working for the Birmingham Children's Theatre and the Alliance Theatre in Atlanta. Janely is very excited to continue her journey with Children's Theatre Company.

Miss Hannigan

Emily Gunyou Halaas was a 1999 – 2000 Performing Apprentice in *Lily's Purple Plastic Purse*; *Green Eggs and Ham/The Old Man Who Loved Cheese*; and *Pinocchio* at Children's Theatre Company. She has performed with La Jolla Playhouse, Hartford Stage, Actors Theatre of Louisville, and with many Twin Cities' theatres, including Guthrie Theater, Theatre de la Jeune Lune, Jungle Theater, and Park Square Theatre.

Drake, Apple Seller, Carriage Driver, Street Sweeper, Sound Man

Gerald Drake has been a member of CTC's Acting Company for 49 years. Among his favorite roles are the Stepmother in early productions of *Cinderella*; Long John Silver in *Treasure Island*; Fagan in *Oliver Twist*; Mr. Toad in *Wind in the Willows*; Lord Capulet in *Romeo and Juliet*; and Afar the Angel in *A Very Old Man with Enormous Wings*.

Mr. Pugh, President Roosevelt, Bundles McCloskey, Lt. Ward, Fred McCracken, Wacky, Dogcatcher, Cab Driver

Dean Holt is a member of CTC's Acting Company (1994 – present), appearing in more than 100 memorable productions in his time at CTC. He is a two-time Ivey Award winner (*Reeling* and *If You Give a Mouse a Cookie*) and the recipient of the Alumni Achievement Award from St. John's University for outstanding work in his field.

Lily St. Regis

Autumn Ness (she/her) is celebrating her 20th season with the CTC Acting Company! Some favorite shows include; *Cinderella*; *Roald Dahl's Matilda the Musical*; *The Biggest Little House in the Forest*; *The Jungle Book*; and *Romeo and Juliet*. Autumn's first show as a playwright, *Babble Lab*, can be seen next season on CTC's Cargill Stage. She is a recipient of the 2018 Fox Foundation Fellowship.

Rooster

Reed Sigmund is loudly celebrating his 20th season as a member of the Acting Company, where he's appeared in shows such as: *Dr. Seuss's How The Grinch Stole Christmas!*; *The Wizard of Oz*; and *A Year with Frog and Toad*. Recently, he's also been seen onstage at Jungle Theater and Theater Latté Da.

Mrs. Greer, Boylan Sister, Sophie, Grandma

Shinah Brashears (she/her) is thrilled to be back at CTC. She was previously seen on The Kennedy Center tour of *Elephant and Piggie's: We Are In A Play* at CTC. She has performed with many other organizations, including Jungle Theater, Theater Latté Da, Guthrie Theater, Chanhassen Dinner Theatres, The Ordway; and 7th House Theater.

Assistant, Chauffeur, Cop, Santa Claus, Producer, Louis McHenry

Marc Gill (he/him) is a semi-recent transfer from Memphis, and is one of CTC's Performing Apprentices. While in the Mid-South, Marc enjoyed roles in *Rent*; *Kiss Me, Kate*; and *Sister Act* (Playhouse on the Square); and *Chicago* and *Six Degrees of Separation* (Theatre Memphis). Marc has also worked with wonderful Minnesota-based companies including Sidekick Theatre, Minnsky Theatre, CTC, What's Next Productions, and GTC Dramatics.

Annie

Nicola Wahl (she/her) is delighted to be returning to CTC. Recent credits include *Roald Dahl's Matilda The Musical* (CTC); *Beyond The Rainbow* (History Theatre); and *Fidgety Fairy Tales* (MACMH). Nicola has trained with Lundstrum Performing Arts, Theater Arts Training, and Broadway Artists Alliance in New York City.

Orphan/Annie Cover

Audrey Mojica is thrilled to be back on stage at CTC! She has appeared as Cindy-Lou Who in *Dr. Seuss's How The Grinch Stole Christmas!* and as Matilda in *Roald Dahl's Matilda The Musical*. Other productions: *The Real Life Adventures of Jimmy de las Rosas* (Steppingstone Theatre); *Frozen Jr.* (YPC); and *Annie* (The Ordway). Audrey is a seventh-grader at Field Community School in Minneapolis and studies performing arts at Lundstrum Performing Arts.

Molly

Elsa Dungan-Hawks is excited to make her Children's Theatre Company debut in *Annie*. She previously appeared in *A Christmas Carol* (Guthrie Theater) and has participated in numerous camps, classes, and showcases throughout the Twin Cities. Elsa is a fourth-grader at Marcy Open School in Minneapolis.

Tessie

Madelyn Davis is proud to make her CTC debut. Madelyn has previously performed in *Beauty and the Beast*; *Annie*; *We Will Rock You*; *Joseph...Dreamcoat*; and *Elf The Musical JR.* with Ashland Productions. She was also a touring member of Fidgety Fairytales for the Minnesota Association for Children's Mental Health.

Boylan Sister/Ensemble

Madison Neal's CTC performances include *Cinderella*; *Dr. Seuss's How The Grinch Stole Christmas!*; *Diary of a Wimpy Kid the Musical*; *Carrie, The Musical*; and *I Come From Arizona*. She's performed with YAI, Contra Theatre Company, Mixed Precipitation, SteppingStone Theatre, and other troupes. She attends CTC's Pre-Professional Institute, class of 2020.

Boylan Sister/Ensemble

Julia Zook (she/her) is thrilled to be making her CTC debut! Previous performances include *Hello Dolly*; *Pippin*; *Birds of Paradise*; *Our Town* (Blue Water Theatre Company); *The Robbed that Smiles* (Women of Will Project); and *A Christmas Carol* (Top Hat Theatre). Julia also loves to work on-screen, including the upcoming feature film *Jasmine Star*.

Bert Healy/Rugrat

Sam Mandell (he/him) is thrilled to be making his CTC debut. He has enjoyed roles in *Elf The Musical JR.* (Stages Theatre Company); *Chaplin: The Musical*; *Beauty and the Beast*; *Mary Poppins*; *Joseph...Dreamcoat* (Minnetonka Theater); *James and the Giant Peach*; and *Mary Poppins* (CTC Junior Intensive).

Rugrat

Luca La Hoz Calassara is excited to be back at CTC, after debuting in *I Come From Arizona* last season. He has performed in *A Christmas Carol* (Guthrie Theater), and participates in Minnesota Opera's Project Opera program, appearing in *Dead Man Walking*; *Odyssey*; and *Belongings*. He's also taken classes with CTC's Theatre Arts Training program.

Orphan

KateMarie Andrews (she/her) is very excited to be back at CTC after having previously played Nansi in *Bob*

Marley's Three Little Birds. KateMarie has previously performed in *High School Musical*; *Akeelah and the Bee*; and *Seussical the Musical* at The Mraz Center for the Performing Arts, Burnsville High School.

Orphan

Anja Arora has enjoyed previous roles in *The Most Magnificent Thing*; *Inch by Inch* (Stages Theatre Company); *Beauty and the Beast JR.*; and *The Music Man Kids* (Minnetonka Elementary Theatre). She is excited for her first appearance with CTC in *Annie* and is grateful to her parents for driving her everywhere.

Orphan

Chloe Lou Erickson is ecstatic to return to CTC in *Annie!* Theatre credits include *Roald Dahl's Matilda The Musical* (Children's Theatre Company); *The Sound of Music* (The Ordway); and *Annie* (Prior Lake Players). Chloe is passionate about theatre, dance, singing, creative writing, and hockey!

Orphan

Adelyn Frost (she/her) is excited to make her CTC debut in *Annie*. She has enjoyed acting since age four. Recent shows include *Annie* (SteppingStone Theatre); *Beauty and the Beast* (Black Dirt Theater); and *Newsies* (Children's Castle Theater). She would like to thank her family for their love and support!

Orphan

Valerie Wick (she/her) excitedly returns to CTC! Val has performed in *The Abominables* (CTC); *The Sound of Music* (National Tour); *White Christmas*; *Jesus Christ Superstar*; *Annie* (The Ordway); and with Project Opera, Lakeshore Players, Stillwater and Woodbury Community Theatres, CGMS, and SPA. Val thanks Andrea Wheeler, Corissa Bussian, and James Rocco!

Ensemble

Joy Meyers (she/her) has played roles in *James and the Giant Peach JR.*; *Annie JR.*; and *Shrek the Musical JR.* in CTC's Junior Intensive programs. She enjoys dancing and has performed with Ballare Teatro Performing Arts Center in South Minneapolis.

Ensemble

Will Schmitt (he/him) is excited to return to CTC after appearing in *Dr. Seuss' How The Grinch Stole Christmas!* last season! Credits: *A Chorus Line*; *Blue Stockings* (SPCPA) *Shrek*; *Mary Poppins*; *Legally Blonde* (Lundstrum Performing Arts). He has also performed with Youth Performance Company, Mixed Precipitation, Exposed Brick Theatre, Ashland Productions, and many more.

Ensemble

Thaddeus (Tad) Williamson is thrilled to appear in his second CTC show! His favorite past productions include *Roald Dahl's Matilda The Musical* (CTC); *Elf the Musical JR.*; *Mary Poppins, JR.* (Stages Theatre Company); *Shrek*; *How to Succeed in Business...*; *Legally Blonde* (Lundstrum Performing Arts); and *Seussical* (Eden Prairie Players).

UNDERSTUDIES

Miss Hannigan, Lily St. Regis, Miss Greer, Boylan Sister, Sophie, Grandma

Becca Hart gleefully returns to CTC after her debut in *The Hobbit*. Other local theatre work includes *Ride the Cyclone*; *Small Mouth Sounds*; *The Wolves*; *Miss Bennet* (Jungle Theater); *Bridges of Madison County*; *Mary Poppins*; *Carousel*; *Phantom of the Opera*; *Candide*; *Music Man* (Artistry); *Urinetown* (Lyric Arts Theater); *The Arsonists* (Frank Theatre); and *Idiot's Delight* (Park Square Theatre/Girl Friday Productions). Hart graduated from St. Olaf College. When not performing, she's drawing cartoons!

Oliver Warbucks

C. Ryan Shipley (he/him) is making his CTC debut. Other credits include *A New Brain*; *She Loves Me*; *Mary Poppins*; *The Music Man*; *The Drowsy Chaperone* (Artistry); *Tenderly: The Rosemary Clooney Musical*;

Holidays with Bing (Old Log Theatre); *Idiot's Delight* (Park Square Theatre/Girl Friday Productions); and *Annie* (Paul Bunyan Playhouse).

Annie

Mabel Weismann is thrilled to be in one of her favorite shows and back at CTC! She previously appeared in *Dr. Seuss's How The Grinch Stole Christmas!* and *Diary of a Wimpy Kid the Musical*. She has also performed at The Ordway; Guthrie Theater; Artistry; and Theater Latté Da.

Molly, Tessie, Kate

Emily Huggett has enjoyed roles in *Three Snow Bears*; *Inch by Inch*; and *The Dot* (Stages Theatre Company); and *Frozen, JR.* (Blue Water Theatre Company). A sixth-grader at South View Middle School in Edina, Emily loves singing, dancing, baking, and playing with her dogs.

Joy, Madison, Julia

Paige Klemenhagen is a tenth-grader at Stillwater Area High School. She's excited for her first production at CTC. She has performed frequently at other organizations, including Ashland Productions, SteppingStone Theatre, and The Zephyr Theatre.

Student Ensemble

Sidney Whiteside is thrilled to be back at CTC, previously appearing in *Dr. Seuss's How The Grinch Stole Christmas!*. A seventh-grader in Minnetonka, Sidney loves being on stage! A few favorite productions include *A Christmas Carol* (Guthrie Theater); *Peter Pan* (Minnetonka Theatre); and *Mary Poppins* (CTC's Junior Intensive). Sidney has been dancing since age three and currently trains at Lundstrum Performing Arts.

Student Ensemble

Peder Lindell is thrilled to be back at CTC since last performing in *Dr. Seuss's How The Grinch Stole Christmas!* and *The Abominables!* His theatre credits include Jungle Theater, Theater Latté Da, Trademark Theater, History Theater, University of Minnesota Opera, Lakes Area Music Festival, and St. Olaf and Carleton Colleges.